



MANSFIELD ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN
Wednesday, September 7, 2016
Town Hall Council Chambers
MINUTES

Members Present: Maggie Ferron (staff), Pat Schneider (staff), Danielle Annibalini (staff), Pam Roberts, Lisa Dahn, Marianne Legassey, Jordana Frost, Kathy Ward, Barb Giardina, Sarah Woulfin, Susan Daley, Lisa Young

Regrets: Rachel Leclerc, Judy Stoughton, Ben Wiles, Heather Lasky, Acey Neel, Johannah Gorgone

Guests: State Rep. Gregg Haddad (D-Mansfield); State Sen. Mae Flexer (D-Killingly)

WHAT	DISCUSSION	OUTCOME
CALL TO ORDER	Maggie Ferron called the meeting to order at 5:47pm.	
CONSENT AGENDA	Approval of the Minutes of June 1, 2016.	<i>The June 1, 2016 meeting minutes were approved.</i>
School Readiness Site Updates	<p><u>CCC</u>: Has been using UConn's Community Outreach group to help create trails and other outside opportunities. They also devoted a parent work day to this task, including building bridges, marking blazes (kids height), and making a fire pit. They've discovered that the more outdoor opportunities they have, the more they want to be outside. Therefore they have started to look for kid-friendly rain pants and other gear. 4 acres of trail, conservation area. CCC has also retained Think Green pest management, for mosquitos, ticks, bees, etc.</p> <p><u>CDL</u>: UConn students back and in the classrooms. The beginning of the school year is about building relationships, that process is underway. This year they are continuing the Bingham Prosocial curriculum as well as implementing the Yale RULER system. The older kids help the new kids and students settle in. Work with other departments, nutritional sciences do groups for kids with eating. Part of the pro-social curriculum is talking to families about children's emotions, even for babies, so that parents are able to build awareness. PD around mindfulness. In NAEYC process for reaccreditation.</p> <p><u>WH</u>: Has been creating its own assessment form to integrate the old preschool assessment with the ELDS. To boost involvement, they have been running activities with parents different times of day and week,</p>	

	<p>field trips, e.g. pumpkin picking, hayrides based on responses from parents. They are also changing how they communicate with parents, going “technology quiet.” Keep screens out of the classroom. Hope to send staff to GA for NAEYC conference.</p> <p><u>MDD</u>: Connected with EastConn high school students to trim paths and carry out other work. Went to ImagiNation, observed a different way to teach. Have every other month parent night.</p> <p>Susan Daley suggested a bus tour of our school readiness sites. As a school readiness council, makes sense to physically check in with our programs. Could carpool, or possibly use Parks and Rec van.</p>	<p><i>Maggie will look into the bus tour, cool idea.</i></p>
Board of Ed Update	<p>Kathy Ward updated the group on the goings-on of the Board of Ed this year. They have created a 5 year plan, that is specific, actionable, able to measure, gives the system a good direction. 5 year plan is available on the website. There has also been a facilities study coming out, the BoE should hear more about it at the upcoming meeting. Regarding the proposal to move EO to the Depot campus, there was a problem with the process. There is a need to ask how the school board is going to engage with the public; i.e., engaging the citizenry in decisions. They may take a representative group (random) for feedback, surveys.</p> <p>Willington approached MBOE to see if they can join our school system. Older facilities, enrollment down in Willington. This would likely entail building another school. Would be creating a regional district, and would involve the State Dept of Ed. Mansfield is interested in looking at it. Problem is estimating “real cost.”</p>	
STAFF REPORT	<p>Staff Report: Maggie Ferron</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer programming highlights – JT programming went well, if not that well attended; 5K made \$2,000 towards maintenance and improvement of playground • Survey progress – 54 responses so far; will analyze more fully next month. • Food Quality & Sourcing Working Group – is working on a Farm to School grant. 	
TOPICAL DISCUSSION: State Rep. Gregg Haddad (D-Mansfield); State	<p><u>Rep. Haddad</u> added some context to the discussion on the budget. Things are grim. We are not in a good place economically- no budget surpluses. Fastest growing line items- debt service, unfunded pension liability. For 70</p>	

<p>Sen. Mae Flexer (D-Killingly)</p>	<p>years the state never contributed a dime. Pay for pension out of state budget.</p> <p>Some growth in revenue, income and sales tax revenue growing some. Biennial budget. It was necessary to keep making cuts as the budget volatility became apparent. The Governor's budget not well received by the legislature. They appropriations committee was hopeful that some things would improve; and the 3d budget passed. Appropriations committee- spending; finance committee does revenue. Then reconciliation. "Meeting of the minds." The end product is frequently political- what can the leadership get votes for? Gregg was unhappy because it was all spending cuts and no revenue raising. They can no longer put together a "rational budget." Further, this year the Children's council got rolled into the Commission on Aging and the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women.</p> <p>Rep. Haddad also discussed the CT Superior Court's decision around education funding. This gave the legislature 180 days to come up with a new formula for distributing education aid. The decision requires the legislature to distribute state educational aid to school districts on a more equitable, rational basis. It also had some strong words for the manner in which Special Ed dollars are spent.</p> <p><u>Sen. Flexer</u> suggested that we should follow these educational issues, including universal early education experience. Paid family and medical leave- had "good support" for the initiative. Has a big price tag.</p> <p>She also described the process of the Care4Kids program cuts and why they were necessary and how they came about. The process was pretty opaque.</p> <p>Need for continue raising revenue- it's a relentless picture. Need to continue to raise revenue in creative ways. Finance committee needs to hear more about where we get the money.</p>	
<p>ADJOURN</p>	<p>The meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.</p> <p>Next Regular MAC Meeting, Wednesday, October 5, Mansfield Senior Center</p> <p>Respectfully submitted, Maggie Ferron, Early Childhood Services Coordinator</p>	